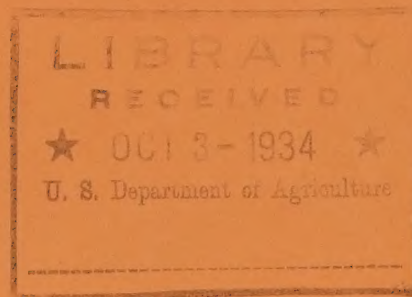


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INTERVIEWING THE CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

"The Cost of Living Today"

This is a sketch of one vista of the New Deal picture, in the form of a dialogue which may be presented by any two people. To take advantage of inside authority, the informative side of the conversation is from the point of view of the Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration with his specialized knowledge of administration activities. This part is introduced as "A Spokesman for Dr. Frederic C. Howe", and designated throughout the dialogue as "Dr. Howe", "Interviewer" is the intelligent inquirer who asks the questions which elicit the information, and the actual name of the person taking this part may be filled in the blank spaces marked "Name of Interviewer".

Issued by the Consumers' Counsel of the
Agricultural Adjustment Administration,
Washington, D. C.

ANNOUNCER:

TODAY we're going to hear some inside information from a spokesman for Dr. Fred C. Howe, about a subject that hits us all, right where we live. That subject is "The Cost of Living Today". Dr. Howe, as Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, will give the answers all consumers want to the vital questions asked in behalf of all consumers.

Dr. Howe, I hope _____ (Name of Interviewer) asks you the right questions, because I'm mighty interested in this subject myself.

INTERVIEWER:

Don't worry, you haven't a thing on me there. If I leave out any questions on this subject, I give you permission to step right in and ask them yourself.

DR. HOWE:

And I don't think I'd let you get away without covering every inch of ground. We're all pretty deeply involved in this matter.

INTERVIEWER:

Dr. Howe, I can't waste any time getting started on this. I've got an important question I've got to get off my mind.

DR. HOWE:

Fire away: I've got a hunch I know what that question's going to be!

INTERVIEWER:

It's this. I think the cost of living has gone up. Am I right or am I--

DR. HOWE:

Right. That is, you're right if you mean that prices have gone up in the last year. They have. But whether the cost of living is high or low to you depends on what the relation is between your income and your expenses.

INTERVIEWER:

Let's draw a veil over that. I don't think anyone ever did find a satisfactory relationship between those two figures.

DR. HOWE:

Well, it can be bad and it can be worse. As it happens, it's better this year than last if we look at it that way. But, let's get back to the beginning of the answer to your question about whether living has really gone up in the last year. There is no doubt about it -- June's dollar this year wouldn't buy as much as the dollar of June 1933.

INTERVIEWER:

How much difference is there, Dr. Howe? Is it as much as it seems?

DR. HOWE:

What it seems, of course, depends on how many dollars you have to spend, in comparison with the number you had last year. Just as I said a moment ago. But I'll get around to that later, when I'll give you the figures on how many of these dollars people have, compared with the number they had last year. Right now I'll stick to what these dollars will do for you, --- supposing you do have them.

INTERVIEWER:

Take food, for instance. Isn't it more expensive? My grocery bills certainly have a way of getting out of hand these days.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, you're right. Food has gone up. It's gone up 12% in the last year.

INTERVIEWER:

I thought so.

DR. HOWE:

You can picture it this way. To buy the food that last year's dollar would buy, you'd have to spend one dollar and twelve cents today. That is, you would if you live in the city. My figure is the average in 32 cities based on the findings of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

INTERVIEWER:

By the way, Dr. Howe, while we're on the subject of food prices: Where do we go from here? What's the drought going to do to our food budget?

DR. HOWE:

It's going to do something to it, -- that's pretty sure now, since the drought condition has continued so severe. We may as well face the facts that consumers' pocketbooks are going to suffer to some degree along with the pocketbooks of the other sufferers from this disaster. People in many parts of the world have been hit by drought, you know, and there doesn't seem to be any escape for any of us.

INTERVIEWER:

I heard from a friend of mine in England that many villages there were entirely without water, and had to buy it by the gallon from other towns. Even London had to regulate the amount of water people were allowed to use.

Yes, crops are badly affected in practically all countries of the northern hemisphere and some in the southern hemisphere. But there are other factors that may help to keep our situation somewhat easier in this country. We've had surpluses of some things for several years, and others are not so seriously cut down. We are saved much punishment by the measures already in operation and others being worked out every day. We're definitely on the job to see that consumers get as little punishment as possible in the circumstances. As we get them, we'll give you the results of some of the Department's studies and tell you in detail just how the country's food supplies stand, what you can expect to pay more for, and the latest advice on how to manage your food budget the best way for your pocketbooks in view of all the things we learn from time to time. But today, I thought I'd paint in the general background of the picture --- tell you how prices have been behaving in the last year, what the foundation is for the next year's developments.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, just the same, I'm rather glad I did interrupt you with my question about the effects of the drought on consumers. I know it's a thing a lot of us have been wondering about. When we know that our case is in your hands in Washington, we can be sure we've got a friend at court.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, we're keeping a close watch on the directions consumer problems are taking and we're going to keep on doing it. Another time, I'll tell you some of the ways consumers can help our office to give the greatest protection.

INTERVIEWER:

But today -- let's get back to your subject. You say food has gone up. Now how about other things? Has everything gone up?

DR. HOWE:

Well, there's one thing on the budget that has not gone up. That's rent.

INTERVIEWER:

I'm glad to hear there is something.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, for every dollar in last year's rent budget, a city worker has to spend only ninety-four cents this year.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, I hadn't noticed it.

DR. HOWE:

You'll have to remember that these are just averages. Maybe a good many people are paying more rent than last year. But the average rent in the thirty-two cities covered by this study has gone down 6%.

INTERVIEWER:

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Good. How about clothes? Up, I'd guess from my own experience.

DR. HOWE:

Right. Clothes went up almost 14%. You had to spend just about a dollar and fourteen cents in June this year for what you'd have spent a dollar for in June 1933.

INTERVIEWER:

Then a dress that cost ten dollars last June, might cost this June -- let's see, about eleven dollars and forty cents, wouldn't it.....

DR. HOWE:

Yes, and overalls that cost a dollar and a half would cost a dollar and seventy-seven cents. Children's shoes that cost three dollars last year would cost nearly three dollars and a half.

INTERVIEWER:

That's a painful item on a good many budgets, I imagine..... Let's see, now... You've covered food, and clothing, and rent. Food's up, clothing's up, and rent's down. What else -- how about the rest of the budget -- household equipment for instance?

DR. HOWE:

Well, our figures call it 'household furnishings and furniture'. That's up 13%.

INTERVIEWER:

Then a bed that cost twenty dollars would cost twenty-two dollars and sixty cents, wouldn't it? And a dining room suite that cost a hundred dollars last June would now cost a hundred and thirteen?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, you've caught our statistical tempo, (Name of Interviewer)..... Fuel and Light is another item on our budget. It's up a little over 5%.

INTERVIEWER:

And that includes our coal and oil for furnaces, gas for cooking, electricity for light and all its other uses?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, that's right.... Now, the rest of the budget is lumped into one item called "All other costs" --- that's up not quite one percent --- just seven-tenths of one percent.

INTERVIEWER:

Let's see, what does that include: the telephone bill, laundry....

- 5 -
DR. HOWE:

Yes-- and cigarettes and movies and newspapers and insurance and charities.....

INTERVIEWER:

What about transportation? That's important money in city people's spending.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, it's too bad we haven't got that item separated from the others. It's included in the other miscellaneous which as a group have gone up only seven-tenths of one percent.

INTERVIEWER:

Then there's doctor bills. Are they included there too?

DR. HOWE:

Yes. They haven't gone up appreciably but of course they always seem worse than any other and higher than ever, and I suppose they always will..... until we get a better way of handling our health problems.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, now you've covered everything: clothes, food, rent, household furnishings, fuel and light, and 'miscellaneous'. As I remember it, clothes went up the most, food next, furniture next, fuel and light not nearly so much, miscellaneous not up even one percent, and rent went down. Then the cost of living, taken altogether really is higher than last year, isn't it?

DR. HOWE:

Remember, it's the average we are always talking about. The average city worker's dollar won't buy so much. In those thirty-two cities, costs, went up, on an average, six percent. In some cities it went up more, and in some cities less than that. In Norfolk, Virginia, for instance, living went up nine and a half percent in the year. But in Seattle it only went up two and a half percent.

INTERVIEWER:

What were the other cities in the study, Dr. Howe? How did Washington rank?

DR. HOWE:

Washington was close to the top. Here's how they go. Next to Norfolk at the top of the list of increases is Detroit, then come Jacksonville, Florida and Washington, D. C. with an increase of around eight and a half percent. Then along come Philadelphia and Richmond, paired with a rise of about seven and a half percent. The big bunch of cities in the list... with boosts of between six and seven percent are Atlanta, Georgia...Memphis, Tennessee...Baltimore, Maryland...Mobile, Alabama...Boston, Massachusetts,...Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

...Birmingham, Alabama...Portland, Maine,...Houston, Texas...Savannah, Georgia
...Indianapolis, Indiana...Scranton, Pennsylvania.

INTERVIEWER:

They're all just about the same as the average for all the cities then...

DR. HOWE:

Yes... The ones next below the average are Buffalo, Cleveland, Minneapolis, New York and San Francisco -- all increased just six percent or less. Then come still smaller increases -- around four and a half percent over last year: Those cities are Cincinnati, Denver, Portland, Oregon, Los Angeles, New Orleans, and St. Louis. Still lower, but not quite at the bottom of the list are Chicago and Kansas City with just about three and a half percent increase. At the very bottom, as I told you before, sits Seattle with a lift of only two and six tenths percent in the cost of living over last year.

INTERVIEWER:

Tell me, how do they figure this cost of living? Do they make up a sample budget, with so much for food and so much for clothing, etc. and then see how it would work out according to the costs of those items?

DR. HOWE:

That's how they do it.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, then, if I don't spend my money in the same proportions as that budget, it doesn't fit me, does it?

DR. HOWE:

You're right. It's based on the way the average working family divides each of its dollars.

INTERVIEWER:

How would that be? Have you got the figures for that? I'd like to see how they compare with the way I divide my budget.

DR. HOWE:

Well, the Bureau of Labor Statistics says the average working family spends thirty-eight cents out of each dollar for food. For clothes, seventeen cents. For rent, fuel and light, furniture and household furnishings all together, twenty-four cents.

INTERVIEWER:

Food, 38; clothing, 17; rent, fuel, light, furniture, 24; that leaves, let me see ---- 21 cents, doesn't it, --- for all those miscellaneous items like doctor bills and transportation and entertainment and insurance and laundry---

DR. HOWE:

Right. If you don't spend your money in those proportions then you'll have to calculate the rise in your cost of living on the basis of your own expenditures. If you spent less for food and more for rent, for instance, then your cost of living hasn't risen so much because food has gone up most... and rent has gone down. But remember, while you're figuring how much your cost of living has gone up, you ought to figure up how much money you're earning if you want to know whether you're ahead of where you stood last year.

INTERVIEWER:

That's right....Have people generally been earning more dollars?

DR. HOWE:

We haven't got records showing what everybody is earning, but if you take factory workers, the Bureau of Labor Statistics says they were better off this June than last. That is, employed factory workers; they got \$1.14 this June for every \$1.00 they were earning last June.

INTERVIEWER:

So if their pay went up 14% and the prices of things they bought only went up six percent, then they are really 7 cents on the dollar to the good, aren't they? They were ahead of the game that much... But Dr. Howe, this study doesn't fit anybody but people working in a factory, does it?

DR. HOWE:

Well, economists feel that changes in the average factory pay roll for the country give a good indication of the way most people's income is going. You can take it for what it's worth to you. For you as an individual your own income in relation to the way you spend it is the most important. But for the country in general you'll admit that the figures on all the money going into payrolls make big news.

INTERVIEWER:

There's no question of that. Tell me, how many more people are earning than were earning in last June?

DR. HOWE:

My figures show that for every hundred workers with jobs in factories in June 1933, there were 121 so employed this June.

INTERVIEWER:

That's good, isn't it?

DR. HOWE:

Good, but not good enough. There are still thousands of families on relief, remember, not earning any pay at all. The last count I've seen was three million, seven hundred and fifty thousand families living on the little weekly sums provided by relief agencies.

Right. If you don't spend your money in these proportions then you'll have to calculate the time in your 28-8-1 living on the basis of your own expenditures. If you spend less for food and more for rent, for instance, then your cost of living hasn't risen so much because food has gone up more than rent has gone down. But remember, while you're figuring how much your cost of living has gone down, you're also figuring how much your cost of living has gone up.

INTERVIEWER:

And that doesn't count the number of families without any income who are living on the help of relatives.

DR. HOWE:

Unfortunately, no. There's no way of counting those up... We've still got a long way to go. We've made a start, but the task is still ahead...

INTERVIEWER:

So if their pay went up 14% and the prices of things they bought only went up six percent, then they are really 7 cents on the dollar in the goods they buy. They were ahead of the game that much. But Dr. Howe, this doesn't count anybody but people working in a factory, does it?

DR. HOWE:

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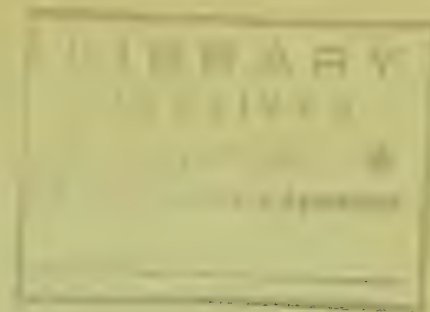
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INTERVIEWING THE CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

"Help Yourself to Honest Value".

This is a sketch of one vista of the New Deal picture, in the form of a dialogue which may be presented by any two people for any educational purpose except over the radio. To take advantage of inside authority, the informative side of the conversation is from the point of view of the Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration with his specialized knowledge of administration activities. This part is introduced as "A Spokesman for Dr. Frederic C. Howe", and designated throughout the dialogue as "Dr. Howe". "Interviewer" is the intelligent inquirer who asks the questions which elicit the information, and the actual name of the person taking this part may be filled in the blank spaces marked "Name of Interviewer".

Issued by the Consumers' Counsel of the
Agricultural Adjustment Administration.
Washington, D. C.

HELP YOUR SELF TO HONEST VALUE

ANNOUNCER:

This is the week's Consumer time. Today (Name of Spokesman) _____ who speaks for Dr. Fred C. Howe, Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, is going to give some suggestions on getting what every consumer hopes for when she buys -- honest value. To be sure consumers learn all Dr. Howe can tell them --- and that's a lot, you know --- (Name of Interviewer) _____ will ask the questions we all need to have answered for us.

Dr. Howe, your title today sounds like a miracle --- 'Helping Yourselves to Honest Value.....

DR. HOWE:

Well, I admit it does present some difficulties -- at least when we go at the problem in an 'every-man-for-himself' way. But you'll notice the title I gave you says 'Helping yourselves;' and not 'Helping yourself.' There's a big difference there.

INTERVIEWER:

I think I know what you mean. That a group organized together for a purpose can accomplish what would really be a miracle if one person tried it for herself.

DR. HOWE:

That's exactly what I mean, (Name of Interviewer) _____

INTERVIEWER:

But, honest value is a wide term, Dr. Howe. Did you have any special type of honest value in mind to talk about today.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, I can narrow it down a lot. I meant full weights and measures. And I wanted to tell you today about specific ways and methods that local bands of consumers can use to keep the towns safe from what the New York Department of Market calls 'Pirates in Pints and Pounds.'

INTERVIEWER:

I'm glad you're bringing us some concrete suggestions about what to do and now to do it, Dr. Howe. I'm sure that is what consumers need most. The spirit is there, and the strength is potentially there, and all that's needed to produce real results is a definite planned project to go to work on.

DR. HOWE:

I'm all set to give you exactly that, (Name of Interviewer) _____ But do you mind if I tell a funny story first? It's not irrelevant --- in fact that's why it strikes me as funny, I guess.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, I'm always willing to call a recess for a funny story, Dr. Howe.

DR. HOWE:

This is a fish story. But it points a moral.

It seems that a certain fish peddler got into the papers a little while back, for a very proud reason. He had become the father of an eighteen pound daughter. Or at least that was his story, and he stuck to it. He became pretty famous, and new customers turned up at his fish cart to hear about it. That is, they came for a day or two. After that, they stayed away in droves. The fish man's undoing came with too much publicity. Baby fanciers came around to inspect his remarkable child, and they stuck a pin in his story. For official weighing reduced the child to twelve pounds. Customers put two and two together and found a good reason for patronizing another fish dealer. The first fine weight had been achieved on the scales with which he weighed out his fish to his clientele.

INTERVIEWER: (laughing)

Is that a true story, Dr. Howe, or did you make it up?

DR. HOWE:

I assure you I did not make it up. I read it in the newspaper. I haven't any documents to prove it, and it may be exaggerated, but ----

INTERVIEWER:

Well, some housewives would tell you it was not exaggerated.

DR. HOWE:

Of course, some people have the bad luck to run up against the outlaws of a trade, and that gives the whole trade a black eye -----, just and unjust alike. One of the best jobs local consumer groups can do is to help straighten out this misunderstanding. They get the cooperation of the honest merchants in the town, and assure them the confidence and trade of the enlightened consumers. One group I meant to tell you about today has done exactly that.

INTERVIEWER:

You mean a consumers' organization can protect consumers from short weights and measures and at the same time protect the honest dealers from consumers' suspicion. I can see there's sense in that. Just how do they go about it,

DR. HOWE:

Well, this group happens to be one of our county consumers' councils organized under the supervision of the National Emergency Council here in Washington. This one does a particularly effective job, using publicity as its main tool.

INTERVIEWER: What sort of publicity?

DR. HOWE:

Various kinds, including window displays in the windows of the cooperating dealers. But the chief form of publicity is a column in each of the newspapers of the county, one appearing every day. The column covers all the activities of the council, but of course in most local groups the activity that heads the list is the one of assuring the community honest weights and measures.

INTERVIEWER:

Does this column actually publish the names of the dishonest dealers.?

DR. HOWE:

No, on the contrary. They publish the names of the dealers who sign up to cooperate with the council in its campaigns. When a case of dishonest practice does come up, it is reported without any names in the column. That seems to be sufficient. The chairman of the council says that they are not interested in picking out individual firms to expose; what they want is to arm consumers with the facts that help them protect themselves.

INTERVIEWER:

Yes, most unfair trade practices are designed to take advantage of ignorance, aren't they?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, ignorance or carelessness. For instance, take the potato racket they reported and put a stop to. A firm had advertised a peck of potatoes for 25 cents when most stores were selling a peck for 31 cents. One bargain hunter went to take advantage of the saving. She bought one peck, which was already wrapped up. While she was waiting for her change, she noticed that the clerk was opening up one of the packages for another customer and adding a few potatoes. She knew his customer happened to be a friend of the clerk's and she wondered what it meant. So she weighed her peck of potatoes. It came to a little over ten pounds.

She called the chairman of the consumers' council. He told her that her suspicions were well grounded. The United States standard for a bushel of potatoes is sixty pounds. There are four pecks in a bushel. So a peck should weigh 15 pounds. It did not take much heavy figuring to prove that a peck weighing ten pounds was no bargain at 25 cents as against a full peck at 31 cents.

INTERVIEWER:

What happened then? How did they stop the racket?

DR. HOWE:

The chairman of the Council sent ten of his consumers in to buy potatoes. Each bought a peck, each asked to have it weighed, and pointed out the correct weight of a peck of potatoes. By the time the tenth consumer bought his potatoes, he got a full peck. And there has been no potato trouble in that town since.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, I asked you for concrete suggestions, and you've certainly given one: I hope organized consumers -- and consumers who might well organize -- are taking notes of these tips. Have you any more of them?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, but I really ought to go back to the beginning and start with the first thing any consumer group should do when they inaugurate their campaign for honest weights and measures.

INTERVIEWER:

You mean, look into the protection they already have under the law?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, I mean they should first make sure they're getting the full benefit of the agencies already operating in their community for their protection. They should find out whether they have officials who are on the job, enforcing whatever local or state laws exist. There is usually some such officer in whose office are the true Government Standards of all weights and measures. Sometimes he's called the 'City Sealer' and sometimes the Commissioner of Weights and Measures, or some other title. Consumers should make it their business to find out if they have such an official. If not, they can use their organized pressure to get legislation that creates the office. If there is one already, see to it that he is doing an honest, effective job, that he has sufficient funds to pay salaries necessary for adequate inspection service. Washington, D. C. sets a good example with a vigilant Department of Weights and Measures. They're always on the job, checking up on gasoline stations and meat markets and bakeries -----

INTERVIEWER:

Do they have a good law about the sizes of loaves of bread to make it easier to protect consumers?

DR. HOWE:

Oh, yes. With standard half-pound, full-pound, and two-pound loaves, it's not easy to make a mistake. Especially with clear, plain labeling.

But all the same, the Department of Weights and Measures has its men out before dawn, going through the bakeries weighing occasional loaves of bread before they make their trips to the grocery stores. You know, in a city that buys as much bread as Washington does, if the one-pound loaf of bread weighed only fourteen ounces, it would take one million dollars a year out of the pockets of the people who need it most.

INTERVIEWER:

What can consumer organizations do in the towns where they do not have such an enforceable law?

DR. HOWE:

In the first place, they can press for a regulation requiring bread to be baked in these standard sizes with no intermediate ones. And until that's accomplished they can do as the consumers' council did in one southern city where the loaves came in all sizes and shapes. In that town, they checked what they were paying per pound against what other towns the same distance from the wheat-growing area were paying per pound, and found they were usually paying a good deal more. So they organized consumers into a campaign to buy this trickily shaped bread only after it had been weighed. That united campaign of enlightened buying soon brought the town's bread prices into line with the prices in the rest of the country.

INTERVIEWER:

That's a note for consumers to take down..... But getting back to Washington, I heard that the job the weights and measures office did for consumers of coal was one of its best performances. Do you happen to have the details of that story at the tip of your tongue, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, the point about that was that the law in the District of Columbia requires coal to be sold by the 'long ton', --- that is, two thousand, two-hundred and forty pounds. A couple of years ago some dealers got together and

agreed to sell coal by the 'short ton' --- just two thousand pounds. They advertised it at a price below what they'd been charging for the 'long ton', but not nearly enough below it to make up the difference in weight. That difference was to cost the consumers just about half a million dollars for the season. After a hard fight in the courts, the Department of Weights and Measures won out and saved consumers that half million.

But that's not my latest coal story, (Name of Interviewer) _____
Did you ever hear of consumers using water for fuel?

INTERVIEWER:

I can't say I have, Dr. Howe, but I don't think it would be a very practical idea, somehow.

DR. HOWE:

It seemed practical to some New York coal dealers. Anyway, they built coal trucks that carried several hundred pounds of water, and when the trucks weighted out the customers were billed for this water. But that's been stopped by the very busy Department of Markets in New York now.

INTERVIEWER:

It's encouraging to see these rackets being stopped.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, it is. I think there's a lot of hope ahead. Official recognition of the evil is rounding out the attack on all fronts.

INTERVIEWER:

By official recognition do you mean that inquiry by the Federal Trade Commission last year?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, that and other older forms of recognition like the 'net weight' labeling law, and the various interstate commerce laws and regulations requiring containers to be manufactured in standard sizes. But why not give consumers the benefit of this research of yours into the Federal Trade Commission report?

INTERVIEWER:

Well, of course, the inquiry I'm talking about covered a lot of other things, but one part of it was on short weighing. At the direction of the Seventieth Congress, investigators bought groceries from all types of stores in each of four cities in different sections of the country. They did their buying incognito, and they bought rice and lima beans and prunes and crackers and sugar in bulk.

DR. HOWE:

Did they find much short weighing?

INTERVIEWER:

Well, it would seem pretty insignificant as an average on individual purchases, but, taken as a total, the report said the short weighing in one type of store was sufficient to pay three percent on the investment in those bulk commodities. And the report also officially stated that in other departments -- like the fresh meat department -- where the turnover was faster, if the same short-weighing went on, it would probably mean more return to the owner at the expense of the consumer.

DR. HOWE:

Official help like that, combined with the organized strength of the consumers themselves in fighting their own battles, should soon wipe out the rackets and restore the good name of all the honest dealers. And it's up to consumers themselves just how soon that day comes.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, you've given us a lot of help, Dr. Howe. And I want to thank you for your concrete suggestions, in the name of all consumers everywhere who cannot afford to pay the toll of short weights in the commodities they buy.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

INTERVIEWING THE CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

"The Natural Prize Package of Food"

This is a sketch of one vista of the New Deal picture, in the form of a dialogue which may be presented by any two people. So take advantage of inside authority, the informative side of the conversation is from the point of view of the Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, with his specialized knowledge of administration activities. This part is introduced as "A Spokesman for Dr. Frederic C. Howe", and designated throughout the dialogue as "Dr. Howe". "Interviewer" is the intelligent inquirer who asks the questions which elicit the information, and the actual name of the person taking this part may be filled in the blank spaces marked 'Name of Interviewer'.

Issued by the Consumers' Counsel of the
Agricultural Adjustment Administration
Washington, D. C.

THE NATURAL PRIZE PACKAGE OF FOOD

ANNOUNCER:

In the next quarter-hour you are going to learn of another spot on the wheel of recovery where citizens can put their shoulders and push. (Name of Interviewer) will ask the questions that all good citizens who are ready to help in this great program want to know. And a spokesman for Dr. Frederic C. Howe will give the answers, for Dr. Howe is Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Here is (Interviewer) now:

INTERVIEWER:

Dr. Howe, some speeches of yours set me thinking -- thinking about eggs. Remember you gave a talk about egg prices. And another time you said one of the important tasks for consumers in the milk situation was to clear up the question of grades for milk. Now: doesn't that apply to eggs, too?

DR. HOWE:

It does apply to eggs. It is just as important to have standard grading in eggs as it is to have graded milk.

INTERVIEWER:

In milk, of course, it's obvious: Babies must have milk, safe milk, of full food value, and pure. But eggs -----

DR. HOWE:

Babies must have eggs, too. The egg is a special kind of food, (interviewer) The thing that makes the egg different from other foods is that it is not meant, first of all, for food. It is the beginning of a chicken. And so in that shell is every single element that is needed for making and feeding and developing new life. It's amazing when you stop to think of it. So it is quite natural that as our nutrition experts discover new food values they find that they are all neatly enclosed in that sanitary package, sealed by nature -- the egg. I think wise mothers have always realized this just by intuition. I know my mother did. As I grow older I notice the scientific people coming around to the same old diets my mother used to take such loving care to feed us children. . . . If you look at the new books on infant care you find the egg yolks becoming more and more a foundation food.

INTERVIEWER:

But is there such a necessity for grading? Aren't eggs pretty good in the markets? I haven't bought a really bad egg in years.

DR. HOWE:

Eggs are a lot better than they used to be since modern refrigeration came along and many states passed laws calling for compulsory candling. My grocer tells me bad eggs are out of date.

INTERVIEWER:

Then why is quality grading for eggs important?

DR. HOWE:

It is important to the consumer, in a very subtle but effective way. I'll tell you how in a minute. But first I want to remind you that it isn't only the egg-eaters we're considering, for we are also interested in farmers who produce the product. In the Agricultural Adjustment Administration our idea is to push along the New Deal in the direction of the farmers. Graded eggs are a great help to the progressive farmer who sells eggs. That means five and a half million out of six million farms. On those farms egg money means shoes and overalls and rubber boots and mittens.

INTERVIEWER:

Of course, consumers realize that farmers must be helped into their stride again, but I never thought of grades and standards as helping anybody but the people who buy and eat the food. I don't quite see where the farmer comes in.

DR. HOWE:

Here is where the farmer comes in. Uniform grading would help the farmer to sell more eggs.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, that would be a help. But how do you know it would, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

As the result of an educational campaign in Iowa many dealers began, on a voluntary basis, the purchase of eggs on grades.

INTERVIEWER:

And did they really sell more eggs?

DR. HOWE:

They did. And what's more, it built up a quality market for the farmer. You see, because he got a better price for his fresher eggs, he had an incentive to take care that they got to the market fresh. Do you know that as a result of grading eggs, farmers in Iowa who sold on a grade boosted their average return from eggs by three cents on every dozen according to a recent survey. That's a big jump. You can figure for yourself what that proportion would do for all the farmers who sell eggs in the country.

INTERVIEWER:

I never thought of that. And you say that the farmers not only got this higher price for their eggs, but actually sold more eggs, too?

DR. HOWE:

That's right. Denmark is another example. When the farmers there took over their own business and marketed their own products through co-operatives, they had the vision to see something they had never been able to show the commercial distributors: That it was actually good business to sell by quality grades. As a result, it frequently happens that if you are sitting in a first-class restaurant as far away as London, and particularly enjoying the flavor of your boiled egg, you can find on its shell a marking that you could follow back right to the farm in Denmark where the hen had laid it.

INTERVIEWER:

That word "flavor" you used then -- is it the significant thing? Is it the flavor of really fresh eggs that increases egg consumption under the system of standard grading?

DR. HOWE:

Actual experience seems to point that way, (Interviewer)
It may seem strange but a subtle thing like the flavor of a stale egg can affect poultry farmers in terms of millions of dollars. Sell some stale eggs to a housewife. She'll discover that Jimmy doesn't seem to have such a good appetite for his breakfast, that her husband has suggested that they try a "Continental" breakfast and lay off eggs for a while. Then down goes the egg-consumption curve.

INTERVIEWER:

I've heard women say exactly those things: "I can't get my children to eat eggs at all." "We're tired of eggs at our house." I don't suppose most of them realize that stale eggs might be at the bottom of it.

DR. HOWE:

Canada has proved that point. In 1920 Canada went in for compulsory egg grading. Gradually egg consumption went up, almost doubled. Now the people of Canada eat nearly thirty dozen eggs a year apiece -- that's about an egg a day. We in the United States don't come near that. We eat about three-quarters of an egg apiece a day.

INTERVIEWER:

Including everything, not only the eggs we eat as eggs, but the eggs we eat as cakes and custards and salad dressing?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, three-quarters of an egg apiece each day in whatever form.

INTERVIEWER:

Is that enough for health, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

It's not even enough as an average. A lot of us don't get even that much. According to the latest nutrition thought, WE ARE ONLY NIBBLING AT OUR HEALTH QUOTA.

INTERVIEWER:

Why isn't that a market for farmers to develop? But I suppose some people are eating other things in place of eggs.

DR. HOWE:

There aren't any other things to take the place of eggs, (Interviewer _____). According to Dr. Sherman of Columbia, eggs have no substitute on the diet, for children or grown people. Doctors prescribe an egg yolk a day for babies from the seventh month or before. The baby needs its iron, and he needs its Vitamin A to help him fight infectious diseases -- like colds, sinus infections, tuberculosis. He needs its Vitamin D to build strong bones and straight sound teeth, to protect him against rickets, to help him in the terrific job of growing during the first years. The point is: Eggs are rich in minerals and in Vitamins A, B, D, and E, so you can see how serious it is if a whole country is not eating enough eggs.

INTERVIEWER:

Then it seems worthwhile for people to demand graded eggs whether they are interested in the farmers' income, or the health of their own families. But, Dr. Howe, what can consumers do? Shouldn't this matter be covered by a law?

DR. HOWE:

I'll answer your last question first, (Name of Interviewer _____). There are laws requiring eggs to be sold by grades in many states and cities. And the Agricultural Adjustment Administration is working to get into the poultry codes provisions for standards and grades. But there is one law that applies everywhere, all the time. It is a law sacred to every merchant. That law says that the customer is always right. If people tell their grocers that they want to buy Government graded eggs, the merchants will sell them Government graded eggs. You can depend on that.

INTERVIEWER:

How can a housewife be sure she is getting these eggs?

DR. HOWE:

Just look for the Government label which seals the carton. It shows the date when the grading was done.

INTERVIEWER:

Doesn't it make a difference how the eggs are handled after grading?

DR. HOWE:

You have hit a very important nail on the head, (Name of Interviewer). It does make a difference how eggs are handled. A merchant who is willing to make a point of handling Government graded eggs is not going to take any chances on his investment by handling them carelessly. But not all grocers do know how. They do not realize that they are handling a perishable delicacy. There is a job of education for you consumers to undertake.

INTERVIEWER:

You mean, we should step in and tell our grocers how to run their business?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, if you mean the same thing I mean by their business. As they see it, their business is to give the customers what the customers ask for at a price they will pay. You have to tell him that business, and you do tell him, every time you buy anything, not only by what you say, but by what you don't say.

INTERVIEWER:

I think I see what you mean. I have a friend who always watches her grocer to see where he gets the eggs he sells her. If he doesn't take them out of the refrigerator, he doesn't make that sale.

DR. HOWE:

If your friend tells the grocer why she doesn't buy, then she is helping to do exactly the educational job I mean when I said consumers would have to teach the grocers that eggs are a perishable delicacy. All good housekeepers know that they must keep their eggs in a closed dish in the refrigerator. Eggs absorb odors. Some of these same consumers will think nothing of buying eggs that are sitting out on a counter right next to onions and cheese and herring. Or they'll buy eggs that have been in a window all day where the sun is beating on the glass.

INTERVIEWER:

I think consumers should make a point of knowing exactly what is a first quality egg. They are purchasing agents for their families, they should know the technicalities of their job.

DR. HOWE:

You are more than right, (Name of Interviewer). A great many women do know as homemakers that it is just good business for them to be informed. But there are some others who make the grocer's job pretty difficult. They buy by superstition and out-of-date notions. For instance, a good many people think that all egg shells are white when they are fresh and as they get old they turn dark. That's nonsense. The color depends on the breed of the hen. It has nothing to do with the freshness of the egg or its food value.

INTERVIEWER:

Is it a superstition, too, that no cold storage egg is a good egg?

DR. HOWE:

If eggs have been in storage only a few months, and if they have been put into storage fresh, they are often even better than the others that you have to choose from. In, say, October or November, storage eggs may be your best buy.

INTERVIEWER:

Are there any scientific ways a home-maker can tell how fresh her eggs are?

DR. HOWE:

You can make a very good test for yourself. Break the egg on a plate. If the yolk stays round like a ball and the white stays solidly up around the yolk, then it is a very good egg indeed. Too good for most commercial purposes. It is the kind that the Government calls "U.S. Special". The kind you pay extra for, to coax a sick person back to health with egg-nogs and soft boiled eggs.

INTERVIEWER:

Wait a moment, Dr. Howe, the first grade is U. S. Special.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, the next grade is perfectly good for your breakfast. It is called "U.S. Extra". The yolk should still be solid and should not break easily, and the white firm and not "runny". The third grade, "U. S. Standard", is the usual egg on the market.

INTERVIEWER:

Is there any difference in the food value of the different grades of eggs, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

There are no definite degrees anyone has been able to define. It's chiefly a question of taste.

INTERVIEWER:

Then if a home-maker is smart enough to think up ways of making eggs appetizing in dishes where the flavor does not depend so much on the egg itself, she can buy the cheaper grades to use in these ways, can't she?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, egg dishes do not need to be dull eating. I know how to cook a good one myself. I learned it from one of the cleverest hostesses I know, who gives Sunday morning breakfasts.

INTERVIEWER:

Share it with us, Dr. Howe.

DR. HOWE:

It's quite simple. Any man could make it, and I know any man would like it. Just scoop out the inside of some good tomatoes, sprinkle salt and pepper inside and some butter and chopped-up onion and green pepper and parsley. Then drop a raw egg in each one and bake slowly until the eggs are firm.

INTERVIEWER:

You make me hungry, Dr. Howe. Tell some more of your favorites.

DR. HOWE:

I like eggs in a dozen different ways -- scrambled with chicken livers, in rarebit, curried, scalloped -- with cheese -- I don't know the names of the ways I like eggs as well as I know the tastes. But if an egg is fresh I don't know of a better way to eat it than just plain boiled. Excuse me, I mean "coddled". Never let any one in the Bureau of Home Economics hear you say the word "boil". It seems that eggs should never actually reach the boiling point. Slow cooking is the idea for digestibility in eggs, even for frying.

INTERVIEWER:

Dr. Howe, I think you have made us all egg-conscious. I think you have given us an entirely new sense of the importance of eggs, both to our palates and our health, and to our national recovery too.

DR. HOWE:

I hope so. I hope you will all get down to business and learn to be technically good egg-consumers.

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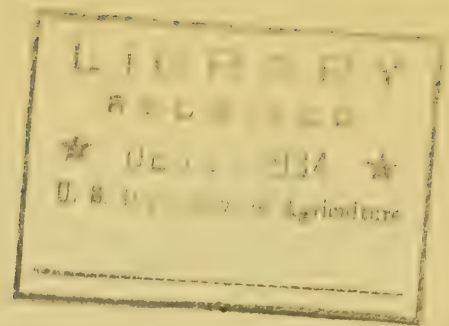
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INTERVIEWING THE CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

"New Deal for New York Consumers"

This is a sketch of one vista of the New Deal picture, in the form of a dialogue which may be presented by any two people for any educational purpose except over the radio. To take advantage of inside authority, the informative side of the conversation is from the point of view of the Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration with his specialized knowledge of administration activities. This part is introduced as "A Spokesman for Dr. Frederic C. Howe", and designated throughout the dialogue as "Dr. Howe". "Interviewer" is the intelligent inquirer who asks the questions which elicit the information, and the actual name of the person taking this part may be filled in the blank spaces marked "Name of Interviewer".

Issued by the Consumers' Counsel of the
Agricultural Adjustment Administration,
Washington, D. C.

NEW DEAL FOR CONSUMERS

ANNOUNCER:

Now for some new consumer talk. Today we're going to hear a true story. It's a rather exciting story, too, if you happen to be interested in the problems of the consumer. And who isn't? So we call upon the spokesman for Dr. Fred C. Howe, Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, to tell us about an interesting new job that New York City is doing for its consumers. (Name of Interviewer) _____ will ask her expert questions to remind Dr. Howe of every fact consumers will want for their own use.

Consumers, I present your Counsel in Washington..... Dr. Howe.

DR. HOWE:

You're right. This is an exciting story I have tell you. It's news.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you mean the market news service, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

Now that's not fair, (Name of Interviewer) _____. You're stealing my thunder.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, I can't let you be the only one to give information. But seriously, I didn't mean to steal your thunder. I've heard so much enthusiastic comment from women in New York about the new Consumers' Division of the Department of Markets that I spoke right out before I thought..... But I'm rather vague about what it is, so kindly ignore my chiseling on your rights, and start right in describing it.

DR. HOWE:

No hard feelings.....

Now to get on with the story. The part of the New York City market news service you've probably heard most about is the part that comes over the radio in the morning. Every woman who happens to have her radio turned on at 8:25 A.M. is sure to learn something to her advantage.

INTERVIEWER:

----- If she is tuned in to the right station -----

DR. HOWE:

Every station is the right station. For the five minutes between eight twenty-five and eight-thirty every weekday morning --- and for ten minutes on Tuesday --- that market report is broadcast right across the dial in New York City. Twelve stations, including the biggest ones in the city, pick up the market news from the municipal station WNYC.

INTERVIEWER:

No wonder everybody knows about it -----

DR. HOWE:

I suppose you know what this market news is ----

INTERVIEWER:

Not exactly. I gathered it included some sort of help in planning meals for the day ----

DR. HOWE:

It does that, all right. But it goes beyond that. Just take a look at some of these sample scripts and you'll see what I mean.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh.... I see.... Well, I should say it does go a good deal farther..... Dr. Howe, couldn't I read bits from these?

DR. HOWE:

Why, sure. Go ahead. That's a good idea.

INTERVIEWER:

Here's a sample from a broadcast of last May.

'Spinach is one of your best buys this morning. There is simply too much spinach on the market and that means bargain prices.'

Here's another item:

'There is a temporary over-supply of asparagus which will last for perhaps another week. Asparagus is selling at extremely low prices now and is one of the vegetables you should buy today.'

DR. HOWE:

Read on in that paragraph and you'll see another side to this consumers' service. One that goes right along with the news of the bargains in perishables.

INTERVIEWER:

You mean smart tips on using the food -- like this:

'When preparing asparagus, break, rather than cut off the tough portion, and tie the asparagus in bunches, with a soft string. Cook it standing upright, in a deep saucepan, with water coming only two thirds of the way to the tips, which should be cooked by steam alone ----'

Why, that's the sort of thing women need..... But I don't see how they can get much in five minutes.

DR. HOWE:

They seem to be able to hit all the high spots of the market news. You can see there how much ground that one script covers. And it's all done in five minutes without any hurry---

INTERVIEWER:

It's a lot of ground, certainly. It covers spinach and asparagus ---- then it introduces kale and tells why people should use it and how to select it and cook it --- gives the other vegetable bargains of the day and -- what's this? It looks like a complete handbook for buying fish -----

DR. HOWE:

Stop a minute on fish. That marks another point of progress in New York. Fish is a nutritious, inexpensive food, yet up to now it's really had only a one-day-a-week sale. The Department of Markets with this Consumers' Service Division has stepped in and shown the way to a higher consumption of fish. They've inaugurated a 'Fish Tuesday' and they go into the fish question, tell how to buy fish, what to look for, give the low-down on fish values, suggest ways of cooking different kinds, and introduces the home-makers to obscure species of food fish few ever heard about. May I ask you an impertinent question,
(Name of Interviewer) _____

INTERVIEWER:

All right. I'll bite.

DR. HOWE:

How many different fish would you be able to name in a fish market?

INTERVIEWER:

Let me see..... haddock, cod, and salmon.... blue fish..... sole..... mackerel..... and flounder --- and -- well ---

DR. HOWE:

There you are. That's seven. You probably could name others, if I gave you time. But most people don't know more than a dozen kinds of fish. Yet the New York fish markets offer several hundred varieties of fish, a good many of them cheaper than the well known ones, and each with its own special qualities. The Consumers' Service Division is helping to acquaint New York City consumers with the less well-known kinds of food fish.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, yes, here in this script is something about a fish I never heard of ---- dabs. The last part of this same script tells about it. Here's what it says:

'Dabs, which are a member of the flounder family, are selling for even lower prices. Why not try dabs and see if your family can recognize any difference at all between them and flounder?'

DR. HOWE:

The fish markets as well as the housewives liked that broadcast.

INTERVIEWER:

Isn't it the same with other foods? If the broadcast tells what's plentiful on the market, doesn't it help to sell the surplus that might go to waste?

DR. HOWE:

Exactly. For instance, last summer, the lima bean crop in four states nearby New York ripened almost on the same day. On Saturday, lima beans were in the luxury class. When hundreds of truckloads of limas crowded into the markets late Sunday night and early Monday morning, prices broke. They dropped to a fraction of what they had been. Farmers and merchants would have been even worse off than they were, if the demand had not been boosted by the broadcast that morning telling of the bargains in lima beans.

INTERVIEWER:

The same morning?

You mean they actually tell what's in the markets the very same day? How do they get the news so quickly?

DR. HOWE:

They're early birds, that's how. The market reporters get out by two or three o'clock in the morning, going through the fruit and vegetable wholesale markets. They check over supplies carefully. They record prices of the various grades of each kind of fruits and vegetables. And they build the morning broadcasts on this news, because the fruits and vegetables that are sold on the wholesale markets during the night are usually sold in the retail stores the same day. The market scouts start telephoning in their first reports to the Consumers' Service Division at about six o'clock. Meantime the bulletins are coming in from the wholesale fresh water and sea food markets. By seven, the staff is busily whipping this hot news (including reports on meats, dairy products, poultry and eggs, received the day before) --- all that, into concise, simple language for the early morning broadcast. Then -- sharp at 8:25 -- it's on the air.

INTERVIEWER:

That's the time of day when the lady of the house begins to draw a few long breaths after getting the children off to school and the husband off to work ---

DR. HOWE:

Yes, that's just what the listeners say. Lots of letters come in like this one:

'I just want to say thank you' ---- the letter says ---- 'for your broadcast every day at 8:25. In the first place, that is a very good time, the children are on their way to school, the men have gone to work. Mamma is washing her breakfast dishes and listening to the radio at the same time. When she goes to market she knows just what to buy of the best and most economical. Thank God for a radio and a sensible Mayor.....'

That's just a sample letter out of hundreds.

Another thing the housewife likes about the broadcast is that she hears this information from another housewife with the same point of view, someone who has had to meet the same problems for the same reasons ----

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, yes, I meant to ask you. Who broadcasts this news?

DR. HOWE:

Mrs. Frances Foley Gannon, the Deputy Commissioner of Markets in Charge of the Consumers' Service Division --- Mrs. Gannon is the mother of five children, the youngest seven and the oldest twenty-one, and she's managed her own household for twenty-five years. Now she's housewife-in-chief for hundreds and thousands of women in the metropolitan area of New York. That's no small set of consumers. Remember that one-tenth of the country's entire population lives in that area.

INTERVIEWER:

Sounds like a good background for the job ---- she has the practical experience to see problems from the point of view of the average housewife.

DR. HOWE:

That's exactly the idea. But of course she has trained home economists and dietitians and nutrition experts to keep her straight technically and she draws on the results of research in diet and nutrition.

And members of her staff are adding to this store of technical information. The corps of CWA workers -- reporters, researchers, dietitians, home economists --- have made a comprehensive survey of more than 350 perishable foods in New York City. They have gathered together all the information possible about these foods. Where they are grown, ---- what varieties they come in, --- how they are cultivated, graded, shipped and distributed, ---- what the seasons are when they come in to New York from each region --- their nutritive value and how they should be served. The Consumers' Service Division boasts that they have as complete a 'Food Reference Library' as ever got stacked up in one place. They are studying other things too -- the costs of marketing and distributing raw foods, municipal markets as a means of closer consumer-farmer relationship, waste and shrinkage as they affect consumer prices... Well, I'm out of breath now, but you gather what a contribution they are making for consumer knowledge ----.

INTERVIEWER:

And all this research is used to produce the morning broadcasts?

DR. HOWE:

That's one use. But the Consumers' Service Division breaks into print as well. When consumers show special interest in any food, the Division answers the demand with a leaflet about it. That way they can help the markets handle extra big supplies too. For instance, when there was a bigger supply of potatoes on hand than people usually consumed, the Division issued a little mimeographed collection of recipes -- "One hundred and thirty-four ways to cook potatoes". Anyone who sent in postage got a copy free, and the demand for potatoes rose up and took the surplus off the market. To fit the needs of the market and the consumer they brought out other sets of recipes: Like 'Sixty Green Salads', and 'Fifty Ways to prepare Cheaper Cuts of Meat', and 'Forty Ways to Use Milk', and so on, according to the market situation.

And then they serve newspaper readers --- releases go out every morning at 8 o'clock to the afternoon papers, and later news by noon to the next morning's papers. All the New York publications get daily or weekly material --- foreign language papers, trade journals, community newspapers and all.

INTERVIEWER:

What was that I heard about a cooking school?

DR. HOWE:

There you go, stealing my thunder again. I was just ready to start telling about that. But since you got in first, I'll have to let you do it.

INTERVIEWER:

Someone told me that when she was shopping in that market under the bridge over the East River ----

DR. HOWE:

The Queensborough Market -----

INTERVIEWER:

That's right. She saw a crowd of women and went over and she stayed all afternoon to watch a meal cooked, along with a lecture. After it was all over, they drew numbers and the lucky numbers carried home the food. My friend's family had free dessert that night.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, they cook family size meals. And the menus in those Tuesday and Friday cooking schools are made up of that day's best buys in the market. The first two cooking schools were so popular that the Division is opening one in each borough of the city. They're even thinking of starting one in the evening for men.

INTERVIEWER:

What will they do next?..... I think it's wonderful that they're putting these unemployed people to work on such valuable jobs ----

DR. HOWE:

Yes, and they fit the project to the talent they get. One of the most amusing studies was of pushcart markets. There's so much color and human interest in these reports that I wouldn't be at all surprised to see them come out as entertainment reading. One for instance gives all the market songs of the Harlem street vendors.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, Dr. Howe, I wish you'd sing one for us.

DR. HOWE:

I wish I could. But it takes a real darky market man to do them justice.

Another reporter has told the story of the foreign foods on the push carts. Most Americans have never heard of these foods yet each has its own special flavor and value, and whole foreign sections of New York live on them. The Department of Markets has collected recipes for using them, too.

INTERVIEWER:

I suppose Americans could learn a lot about getting vitamins and variety at a low cost from these foreign ways of eating.

DR. HOWE:

That might very well be -- in cities where the ingredients for the foreign dishes can be bought. Anyway, I'd like to see information about such dishes in the hands of every housewife.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, it looks as if much of it would get into the New York homes one way or another. The sky seems to be the limit to where this service could go ----

DR. HOWE:

Mrs. Gannon wrote to us the other day saying their work 'is in its infancy.' But she goes on to say, 'We feel that already we are bringing about a remarkable solidarity of consumer attention in the metropolitan area of New York. We know that housewives are closely following the information that we are giving out. Their strict attention to general market conditions is bound to have its reaction in bringing about a closer parallel between wholesale and retail prices.'

INTERVIEWER:

I don't see any reason why other cities couldn't do the same thing for their consumers -----

DR. HOWE:

I knew I could count on you to see that vision, (Name of Interviewer) _____. It's a pet program of mine. What New York City is doing could be done in hundreds of towns throughout the country. Some municipal governments already have a Department of Markets or similar office which might take on this duty to the public. In cities that don't have such a service, women's clubs or consumer organizations might work to induce the city government to create a unit to do this job.

The New York Department of Markets has set a fine example in the imagination its officers have put into this work; they have made housekeeping less difficult; they are showing ways to build healthier, stronger citizens, they are helping to regularize the demand for valuable perishable foods; and they are helping make better returns possible to producers.

INTERVIEWER:

You're doing a good many things like that in your own office ----
For instance, the Consumers' Guide-----

DR. HOWE:

Oh, of course we can give you reports of national and regional food supplies and tell you what is behind price changes in general. But daily changes in your own markets, news that can be used to advantage by housewives that very minute --- well, that's a job that's got to be done on the spot --- locally.

INTERVIEWER:

I think you've presented a splendid concrete project to everybody listening -- one that all of us can get to work on right in our own communities.

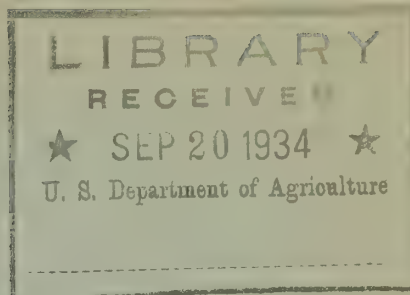
DR. HOWE:

I'd ask nothing better of this interview if it started wheels turning among all public spirited organizations and individuals.

INTERVIEWER:

Dr. Howe, I'm not going to let this discussion stop with your slight reference to the Guide. I want to remind everybody again that you can have this ever-ready help in all consumer problems every two weeks, free, by sending your name and address in to Dr. Howe's office. Ask for the Consumers' Guide, and address the Consumers' Counsel, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington.

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INTERVIEWING THE CONSUMER'S COUNSEL

"The Road to Good Consumership"

This is a sketch of one vista of the New Deal picture, in the form of a dialogue which may be presented by any two people. To take advantage of inside authority, the informative side of the conversation is from the point of view of the Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration with his specialized knowledge of administration activities. This part is introduced as "A Spokesman for Dr. Fredric C. Howe", and designated throughout the dialogue as "Dr. Howe". "Interviewer" is the intelligent inquirer who asks the questions which elicit the information, and the actual name of the person taking this part may be filled in the blank spaces marked "Name of Interviewer".

Issued by the Consumers' Counsel of the
Agricultural Adjustment Administration,
Washington, D. C.

THE ROAD TO GOOD CONSUMERSHIP

ANNOUNCER:

We've got a fifteen-minute treat ahead of us today -- an interview between Dr. Fred C. Howe and (Name of interviewer) Dr. Howe, as Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, will give us a quick series of snapshots of what has been done for us all, as consumers, and what he hopes to do in the future with the help of the consumers themselves.

INTERVIEWER:

Why don't we just begin at the beginning and start with the day you came to Washington and started being Consumers' Counsel? Tell me, isn't that a new title? How did it happen?

DR. HOWE:

It is a new title, and it's a new idea. I think that's one of the most important reasons for feeling encouraged about our work. Because it's the first time this country has ever recognized the Consumer, taken consideration of the Consumer, governmentally speaking. You asked how it happened to come about. Well, the Agricultural Adjustment Act called for it. You remember the Act was passed by Congress over a year ago. In it were clauses specifically demanding that the administration "protect the consumers' interest", in the process of lifting the prices farmers get for their foods products. The Act specifies that we should do our job largely by publicity --- giving the facts to consumers on such matters as how much of the price they're paying for a commodity goes to the farmer, how much is due to the processing tax ---

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, I remember reading last fall you got the department store people together in Washington and asked them to explain why sales people were blaming the processing tax for the big jumps in the price of cotton goods ---

DR. HOWE:

Yes, the cost of the processing tax should never be more than five cents a pound, but sheets and work shirts and towels and all other cotton things were going up by leaps and bounds --- each leap and bound amounting to that much. But probably the actual detailed shipping information about buying cotton goods that we published in the Consumers' Guide was more helpful generally ---

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, yes, and there's the Guide. It's the Bible of local Consumers' Councils. There surely isn't any other simple, popular presentation of last-minute food prices all over the country with interpretations of their meaning, is there? I know consumer groups in a great many places swear by it ----

DR. HOWE:

Yes, and I'm afraid some people swear at it, from time to time. One of the first tasks we had when we first started, was to be rather rude to the bakers. Bread prices were starting a sky ride. We gave some publicity to the fact that the processing tax couldn't add more than half a cent to the cost of a pound loaf of bread. The baking industry has stayed pretty well in line ever since. In two or three cities it started to go out of bounds but in several cases I know about, the local consumers' councils acted with such determination that they stepped right back in line ----

INTERVIEWER:

You've been working to get Government standards into bread-making, too, haven't you?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, we have, along with a lot of other excellent agencies. Our platform, of course, is Government standards and grades on all food products. The Bureau of Home Economics of the Department of Agriculture provides the technical foundation for our drives. The influence of the Consumers' Advisory Board of the NRA and a lot of progressive consumer organizations made itself felt in the bakers' code. It was approved with a clause in it calling for a committee to investigate and report on possibilities of submitting definite standards for bread.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, I hope they'll really get them some time. What good is the regulation of prices of pounds of bread if we don't know what makes up the loaf we're paying for?

DR. HOWE:

That's exactly the point ---- And while we're on the subject of codes, I might mention that now the code has been signed we may run the risk of having bread prices go up with a new excuse.

INTERVIEWER:

You mean they'll say the way they do about other products ---- that NRA labor costs are bringing up the prices?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, though if you actually had the figures on the cost of labor in most articles you'd realize how little basis there usually is to that argument. In bread for instance, one cent covers all possible labor costs of a pound loaf of bread.

INTERVIEWER:

Then they'll have to double their labor costs in order to raise the price one cent -- legitimately -- wouldn't they?

DR. HOWE:

That's right.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, industries certainly are not doubling any pay rolls under their Blue Eagle codes, are they --- Speaking of codes --- does your office do anything about codes, like the Consumers' Advisory Board of the NRA?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, our economists work on the codes we have over here, but mostly they are marketing agreements for farm products. Our economists -- specialists in the different fields -- check on each code and marketing agreement.

INTERVIEWER:

What do you mean----check on these agreements?

DR. HOWE:

Well, we dig up the facts, by research, that consumer interest should bring out, and then we examine the codes on several counts. First of all--- they should be of some benefit to the farmer. The farmer's our first consideration, here in the Triple A's. Then, helping the farmer must not involve unjustifiable burden on the consumer. The third thing we try for is to get grading and standardizing of the product to insure the honesty of weights and measures and of the product itself ----

INTERVIEWER:

That's an important point --- if you'll pardon me for interrupting, I'd like to point out that your job of consumer education is one of the very new and valuable things you're doing for the women of America.

DR. HOWE:

Well, I'm glad you stopped me there. Because there's one thing I want to be sure to get across today. And that is, that in this New Deal for consumers, people have got a big job to do for themselves. It's true, we're trying to put some of the facts before you that will help you learn to be good consumers. But we can't make good consumers out of you if you aren't ready to work at it yourselves.

INTERVIEWER:

What is your definition of a good consumer, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

A good consumer is a family purchasing agent who is consumer conscious. The consumer is getting a break -- governmentally speaking -- for the first time getting a new deal. The idea is growing, and I think it is of the utmost importance that groups of people should organize to take this concept and build it up --- this concept of state-consumer relationship. The general motif --- the theme song of the relationship should be --- "Goods are produced to be used, not merely produced".

INTERVIEWER:

If consumers could succeed in putting that idea over, they'd go a long way to building a better society ---

DR. HOWE:

You're right, and I think they could, too, women as well as men. Because nowadays we have a woman's society as well as a man's society. The women do 85% of the retail spending, you know. Their job is guarding the pay envelope, guiding the nation's income the way it should go. It's time for women --- no matter what else they do --- to learn to be intelligent about using that paycheck.

INTERVIEWER:

Dr. Howe, couldn't you give a little summary, so that no one misses these important points --- of how good consumers should go about their business?

DR. HOWE:

Well, they look first of all for honesty --- honest food, honestly labeled, sold by honest weights and honest measures. They patronize the dealer who sells Government graded eggs and meats, and fowls. Then they look for good quality and in the effort to get good quality they demand definite standards and grades that they can depend on for their buying, instead of the flowery recommendations that they are so often forced to choose from. From the consumer's own selfish point of view, all you need is to educate yourself to know how to get your money's worth. But of course we in the three A's go further and work to the end that the farmer gets a fair break in the distribution of her food dollar, too.

INTERVIEWER:

When you were talking about codes and marketing agreements, you said that. Tell us --- Have you been able to help the farmer much in these marketing agreements?

DR. HOWE:

Well, here's an example --- clingstone peaches. Last year these peach growers out in California got \$6.50 a ton for their peaches. They made altogether for the whole season --- that's their total income from these peaches --- \$900,000.

INTERVIEWER:

And this year?

DR. HOWE:

This year they all signed up and stuck to their marketing agreement. They left a certain number of their peaches on the trees, according to a fair allotment, --- instead of trying as they did last year to sell their whole crop, but only selling 60% of it ---. They got \$20 a ton for what they did sell this year, and for what they left on the trees they got \$15 a ton. And their income for this year was five million dollars, instead of \$900,000 like last year.

INTERVIEWER:

But didn't the consumer pay for that extra income to the farmers?

DR. HOWE:

We consumers paid two cents more for each No. 2½ can of clingstone peaches than we paid last year. That's an increase of about five to ten percent. But think what an increase it was to the growers! Five hundred per cent! It means the difference between security and ruin.

INTERVIEWER:

That's what you mean, then, by a "justifiable" price increase?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, naturally some of the cost of the farmers' livelihood must be borne by the people who eat the food he grows. What we're there for, is to see that these extra costs --- like the processing tax --- aren't "pyramided".

INTERVIEWER:

I'm ashamed to admit I never quite understood what that word "pyramid" means in this sense.

DR. HOWE:

Well picture a pyramid --- like the ones in Egypt --- standing upside down. Let's imagine the point of it is the processing tax. Sometimes half a cent processing tax will be enough to jump the price of goods from one price range over the line up into another higher price range. And percentages all along from one handler to another will be figured accordingly, so that by the time a whole long line of middlemen have done this, the poor little processing tax has accumulated like a snowball and added quite a chunk to the price you pay at the end of the line.

INTERVIEWER:

What they should do, then, is to add the processing tax as a separate item after they've done all their other figuring, so that it stays the same, all along the line --- so that if it starts out as five cents a pound it's still five cents a pound when it gets to us ---

DR. HOWE:

Right ---- Giving consumers that kind of self-protective information is one of our big jobs, of course. We do it by the Consumers' Guide, the newspapers, and radio. But I don't want you to think it's the only one. I'd like to remind everyone that there is still a bigger job, and it's a job for all citizens. That is -- to see to it, that in a country where there is enough food for everybody, our people too weak and young to protect themselves do not go hungry. There is a program for American citizens ----

INTERVIEWER:

I think you should go into detail, Dr. Howe. Tell us some concrete things each of us can do.

DR. HOWE:

You may have heard what many cities are doing about school lunches----- That's a special community job -- a job that cries to be done, is being done by many groups in many places --- As a part of that, you can look into the project of using the dried skim milk formula for the school lunch loaf of bread to help get more milk into the children's diet. That formula is available, you can get it by writing in to the Bureau of Home Economics.----- Then there are gardens and canning centers --- you can get behind your local relief administrator and take over your part of this job of raising and canning food for next winter's hungry, under the new officially coordinated plans --- And you can give your support to cooperative markets where farm people sell their products to city people.

INTERVIEWER:

And then of course there's your milk survey ----

DR. HOWE:

Yes, I don't think we can mention too often that citizens who really have the good of their community at heart should get to work and find out how much milk their future citizens are getting. That's the first step toward giving all children the foundation that's absolutely essential to their usefulness in later life --- their usefulness to themselves, to the place they live in, to the people they live among ----- One way to get facts is to use the questionnaire our office worked out for the sixty odd typical cities our survey covers. Anyone, even if you don't live in one of these cities, can get copies of this questionnaire by sending in to us --- address Consumers' Counsel, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington.

INTERVIEWER:

Thank you, Dr. How, for making this all so clear. And I want to thank you for another thing, too----- that handbook for women, which you've got ready for distribution to conventions of organizations of women. I certainly recommend that every woman who plans to attend any sort of women's meeting --- big or little --- make sure that Dr. Howe's book is on hand. It's called "Woman's Part in a Better America", and it's available in his office. People who belong to clubs should ask your club officers if it is coming to your meeting. If not, write in to his office, Consumers' Counsel, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, for the number of copies you need.

1945
Agricultural
Adjustment

INTERVIEWING THE CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

"The Story of Sugar"

This is a sketch of one vista of the New Deal picture, in the form of a dialogue which may be presented by any two people. To take advantage of inside authority, the informative side of the conversation is from the point of view of the Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration with his specialized knowledge of administration activities. This part is introduced as "A Spokesman for Dr. Frederic C. Howe", and designated throughout the dialogue as "Dr. Howe". "Interviewer" is the intelligent inquirer who asks the questions which elicit the information, and the actual name of the person taking this part may be filled in the blank spaces marked "Name of Interviewer".

Issued by the Consumers' Counsel of the
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Washington, D. C.

THE STORY OF SUGAR

ANNOUNCER:

Today we present an interview between a spokesman for Dr. Fred C. Howe, Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and (Name of interviewer)..... Today Doctor Howe and (Name of interviewer)..... will discuss the sugar situation -- I think their talk ought to be entitled "The Sweetest Story Ever Told." What about that, Doctor Howe!

DR. HOWE:

Well, it's a nice thought -- but not altogether fitting and proper -- the sugar situation being what it is.

ANNOUNCER:

Sorry!

DR. HOWE:

Oh, that's all right. I'm very much interested in this sugar problem, and I want you folks to get the facts about it.

INTERVIEWER:

I'm afraid I can't help much with your sugar discussion.

DR. HOWE:

Why not?

INTERVIEWER:

Because I don't know enough about it, from an economic standpoint. All I know about sugar is how much it takes to make a dozen glasses of currant jelly -- things like that. I have the homemakers' viewpoint -- not the economists'!

DR. HOWE:

You're interested in the price of sugar, aren't you?

INTERVIEWER:

Most certainly I am. Of course. Don't tell me that the price is going to shoot up -- on account of the processing tax of half a cent a pound.

DR. HOWE:

Well, remember that the same day the processing tax went into effect, the tariff on sugar from Cuba and other foreign countries was reduced half a cent a pound. In anticipation of this reduction, the price of sugar declined steadily during the past three months. The average retail price in the United States dropped from 5.6 cents per pound, in early February, to 5.3 cents on June 5, which is almost a cent lower than the pre-war retail price.

INTERVIEWER:

The wholesale price dropped too, didn't it?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, the wholesale price of raw refined sugar dropped in even larger amount.

INTERVIEWER:

Then the new tax just about cancels the drop due to the tariff reduction.

DR. HOWE:

In effect, yes. The tax balances the tariff reduction, so you shouldn't have to pay any more for sugar than you paid before the tariff reduction plan was announced.

INTERVIEWER:

Will the price of sugar go up?

DR. HOWE:

There may be a rise of about half a cent retail, over more recent prices. As I have said, we've been paying a pretty low price for sugar, during the past few months -- since the tariff reduction was announced.

INTERVIEWER:

Who gets the money, if the price of sugar is increased as a result of the processing tax? The sugar industry?

DR. HOWE:

Indirectly, yes, as the money collected from processing taxes will go into a fund which will later be paid to beet and cane growers in the form of benefit payments.

INTERVIEWER:

Dr. Howe, I'm going to ask you to explain the national sugar program today. Will you please describe the sugar situation step by step -- so it will be easy to understand?

DR. HOWE:

I'll do my best.

INTERVIEWER:

You know it's rather hard for the homemaker to be plunged into a sea of "quotas", and "tariffs", and "processing taxes", all at once. It's quite bewildering.

DR. HOWE:

No more bewildering than it would be for me to try to put up a winter's supply of fruits and vegetables, by this hard-pack process.

INTERVIEWER:

Hot-pack, Dr. Howe -- not hard.

DR. HOWE:

Hot-pack. That's right -- hot-pack. You can see I don't know any more about it than you housekeepers know about the sugar industry -- probably not so much. Now -- (Name of interviewer) what do you want to know first about sugar?

INTERVIEWER:

Let's begin at the beginning. How long have we had sugar?

DR. HOWE:

I don't know for sure. Before the Christian era, Europe was importing small quantities of sugar from the Orient. It was a luxury, like spices. For many centuries, sugar was used only as a medicine. Toward the end of the Middle Ages, it was served as a sweetmeat, but it was still a very costly product.

INTERVIEWER:

You say Europe imported sugar from the Orient. How long had the Orient-als been using sugar?

DR. HOWE:

I can't answer that question. I know that sugar is mentioned in the Sanskrit language of ancient India.

INTERVIEWER:

Sanskrit is one of the oldest languages, isn't it?

DR. HOWE:

If I remember correctly, it dates from around 2,000 B.C. Now are you convinced that sugar is an ancient product?

INTERVIEWER:

Yes. I'm thoroughly convinced. Of course all the early sugar was made from sugar cane.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, that's the oldest sugar-producing plant. The Arabs carried sugar cane into northern Africa, and sometime during the Eighth Century, it reached Europe. We don't know when it came to North America. There's a legend that Columbus brought some sugar-cane seedlings on his second voyage.

INTERVIEWER:

Who discovered that sugar could be made from beets?

DR. HOWE:

Probably a Chinese.

INTERVIEWER: (Surprised, and well she may be)

But sugar from sugar beets is very modern, Doctor Howe.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, as we know it. However, the Chinese were making a crude sugar from beet juice in the very early days.

INTERVIEWER:

Is that possible! I supposed beet sugar was comparatively new.

DR. HOWE:

You're right in supposing that beet sugar, refined is comparatively new. Until only two or three generations ago, Europe and America relied almost entirely on sugar-cane, for sugar. People laughed at the idea of making sugar from beets. In France, they made fun of Napoleon the First, because he offered a prize of one million francs for the best method of manufacturing sugar from beets. Somebody published a caricature, in 1811 I believe it was, ridiculing the Emperor and his son, the little King of Rome.

INTERVIEWER:

How were they caricatured?

DR. HOWE:

Napoleon was pictured sitting in a nursery, squeezing a beet into a cup of coffee. His little son was sitting near him, chewing a sugar beet. The nurse was saying: "Suck, dear, suck! Your father says it's sugar!"

INTERVIEWER:

And now -- isn't there just as much beet sugar as cane?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, the world supply is now about equally divided between cane and beet sugar.

INTERVIEWER:

And there's no difference in quality, between the two kinds.

DR. HOWE:

None at all, for ordinary uses. And chemically they are exactly the same.

Now, (Name of interviewer).....I'm going to explain the

Government sugar program. You know what the World War did to the industry -- it completely dislocated the world sugar trade. It destroyed two-thirds of the beet sugar industry in Europe. Cuba and Java produced more and more cane sugar. There was a world shortage, prices went sky high, and Cuba and Java continued to prosper. Before long, the producers were turning out more sugar than the world could use -- there was a huge surplus -- there still is, and that's why we have a sugar problem.

INTERVIEWER:

Is there a sugar surplus in the United States?

DR. HOWE:

In certain areas of the country, yes. Taking the continental United States as a whole, no. We produce only about twenty-five percent of the sugar we use. If we include the supply from Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Philippine Islands, we produce seventy-five to eighty percent. To make up the balance, we have to import sugar from Cuba.

INTERVIEWER:

How much sugar do we use, altogether, in a year?

DR. HOWE:

Last year, we used about 5,200,000 long tons -- that's about 94 pounds of sugar for each person in the United States. About one-fifth of this total was beet sugar, produced in seventeen States. The rest of it was cane sugar, produced in our two cane-sugar States, Louisiana and Florida, in the island territories, and in Cuba.

INTERVIEWER:

Aren't we using less sugar than we used to, Doctor Howe?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, we've been using less and less, during recent years.

INTERVIEWER:

I suppose the fad for dieting has had something to do with the decrease.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, dieting, along with reduced incomes and unemployment. Families on low incomes cut down on desserts. And candy. But the dieting fad seems to be on the wane. Just the other day I saw a report from the United States Department of Commerce, showing that in the first four months of this year candy sales rose more than twenty-eight percent above those of a year ago.

INTERVIEWER:

Americans must be resuming their candy-eating habits. But tell us more about the national sugar program. What is the Government trying to do, for sugar producers?

DR. HOWE:

One of the chief aims of the Government program is to stabilize the sugar industry, to prevent a collapse of prices which would bring distress to some eighty thousand sugar farmers. Congress has made sugar a basic commodity. Unlike milk, which is a national and a local problem, sugar is an international problem. We can't cure our own sugar troubles without considering the world situation.

INTERVIEWER:

What was the tariff on sugar, before the processing tax went into effect?

DR. HOWE:

Two cents a pound on Cuban sugar for the raw product; two and a half cents on other foreign sugar.

INTERVIEWER:

Didn't this tariff help protect our beet and cane-sugar farmers?

DR. HOWE:

To a certain extent, but you see, there's no tariff on sugar from our island possessions. So whatever Cuban sugar was shut out of our markets by the tariff was replaced by sugar from our island possessions, especially the Philippines. Therefore, the tariff didn't give full price protection to the producers in the United States. They were bound to keep on suffering more and more from the effects of low prices, unless we did something to decrease shipments from outside the country.

INTERVIEWER:

So that's why the Government has limited the amount of sugar from the island territories, and from Cuba, by means of quotas.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, the Government wants to stabilize the situation through definite quotas of marketings from the United States, from the islands, and from foreign countries. The plan is to guarantee the income of domestic producers.

INTERVIEWER:

Have these quotas been announced?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, a few weeks ago, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration announced the exact amounts of sugar quotas, both off-shore and continental. The requirements for continental United States for 1934 are fixed at 6,476,000 short tons of sugar, raw value.

INTERVIEWER:

What is Cuba's quota, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

For the calendar year 1934, 1,902,000 short tons.

INTERVIEWER:

And how much did we import last year, from Cuba?

DR. HOWE:

In 1932-33, we imported 1,601,000 short tons for consumption.

INTERVIEWER:

Couldn't the United States produce enough sugar to supply all our own needs, without depending on the outside?

DR. HOWE:

We could, I suppose -- but that would mean an even higher tariff policy than we have had, and would make Cuba's economic condition even more serious. Our high sugar tariff took away the chief market for her main product. As a result, thousands of farmers in the United States could no longer sell their products to Cuba. You may remember that Cuba used to depend on us for much of her butter, cheese, milk, pork, lard, corn, oats, wheat flour, and vegetable oils.

INTERVIEWER:

Then Cuba was a very good export outlet for American farm products?

DR. HOWE:

That's right. Now, shall I sum up the principal objectives of the Administration's sugar program?

INTERVIEWER:

I wish you would. And please don't make it too technical, Doctor Howe. Remember that most of us think of sugar in terms of how much we need every week, for ordinary cooking purposes.

DR. HOWE: (Read fast)

Well, the first objective of the sugar program is to insure stability to the domestic producers of beets and cane by giving them a virtual guarantee of fair exchange or parity returns on a level of production representing more continental sugar than has ever been successfully sold in a single year.

INTERVIEWER: (Exhausted)

You don't say! So that's the first objective . . . Well, well - it certainly sounds fine. But if you don't mind telling us -- what does it mean?

DR. HOWE: (Somewhat lamely)

Why -- just what I said. It means that -- that --

INTERVIEWER:

Say it with simple words, Doctor Howe. If you please.

DR. HOWE: (Determined to please the ladies)

All right. The Government, through its sugar program is asking cane and beet sugar farmers to adjust their crops in return for benefit payments. Is that clear?

INTERVIEWER:

Yes, that's clear. Thank you very much.

DR. HOWE:

Now, to finance the sugar program -- the benefit payments -- the Government levies a processing tax of half a cent a pound on sugar.

INTERVIEWER:

I understand that. Then, to balance the processing tax, the Government -- But go ahead, Doctor Howe.

DR. HOWE: (Suspiciously)

(Name of interviewer)....., I believe you know more about the sugar program than you're pretending.

INTERVIEWER: (Innocently)

All I know is what you've told me today.

DR. HOWE:

Well, to balance the processing tax, and avoid increased price to the consumer, the Government reduces the tariff on sugar half a cent a pound. The sugar program also seeks to increase the income and buying power of domestic producers, to improve labor conditions, and to regulate child labor.

INTERVIEWER:

Thank you, Doctor Howe. Sugar will never be quite the same -- after today. Whenever I take sugar with my tea or coffee, I'll be thinking of the international situation, of economic problems in Cuba, of tariff reductions and quotas.

DR. HOWE:

And Napoleon the First and his sugar beet?

INTERVIEWER:

Yes, and the Chinese who first discovered that sugar could be extracted from beet juice. I wonder what his name was.

DR. HOWE:

I don't know. You shouldn't propound questions I can't answer. (Name of interviewer).....

INTERVIEWER:

You answered all the important ones, Doctor Howe, and we appreciate your explanations.

Issued by the Consumers' Counsel of the
Agricultural Adjustment Administration,
Washington, D. C.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF FOOD PRICES

ANNOUNCER:

Consumer time is here again! A spokesman for Dr. Fred C. Howe, Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and (Name of Interviewer) _____ will discuss today's consumer problem.

This subject is ---- 'The Ups and Downs of Food Prices! ----- Dr. Howe, don't tell us food prices ever go down!

DR. HOWE:

I'll go you one better than that: I'll tell you food prices went down in November--- in two months before that too.

ANNOUNCER:

Well, the only answer to that one is --- what food prices?

INTERVIEWER:

Dr. Howe, I know you wouldn't say anything you couldn't back up with figures, but I must admit -- like (Name of Announcer) _____, I want to be shown. Which foods do you mean?

DR. HO

WE:

The average for all food prices -- made up of 42 different basic foods according to their importance in consumption --- went down almost 2 percent between September 11 and November 20.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, -- that's not very much -- two percent.

DR. HOWE:

Averages always flatten out that way. Look at the big rise people were complaining about this summer. When it's average out over all the foods it only comes to six percent. And when you stop to think that the autumn is the high spot of the year for food prices, and they went up only six percent between June and September, then the almost two percent drop between September 11 and November 20 looks like quite a silver lining.

INTERVIEWER:

That's true..... But wait a minute, Dr. Howe. You said something I want to know more about. What did you mean about autumn being 'the high spot of the year for food prices.'?

DR. HOWE:

That's what I thought we might talk about today, (Name of Interviewer) _____: This regular seasonal rise and fall of food prices. You know it goes on all the time, right around the year. Depressions may go and recovery come, but the seasons go right along, carrying prices of some foods up and down in exactly the same patterns year after year.

INTERVIEWER:

Then this six percent jump food prices took since June -- the one we hear so much about --- then that wasn't all on account of the drought or the other things people blamed?

DR. HOWE:

Three percent of the six -- half of it -- was the normal rise we would have had to expect for that time of year. Some of the foods that caused a lot of crying did not even take as much as their normal increase for the time of year. Pork chops, for instance, were selling in October at an average price of 27.4¢ a pound in fifty one cities across the country. Now if they had swung as high above their June price this year as they usually do, they'd have sold for 28.2¢ a pound.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you mean to say you economists can tell in advance just what food prices will do at any given time of year?

DR. HOWE:

Look out, or you'll have economists looking like fortune tellers --- But they have worked out ways of measuring these seasonal rhythms and charting the course of prices as they have moved on different foods for the last twelve years. They cover seven so-called prosperous years and five depression years, and they come as close as we can come to being fair measures of change. As production of food changes, as transportation improves, these seasonal price trends may change, too. But right now they do seem to follow the pattern of the past 12 years. The studies of price trends give consumers definite, dependable information that goes farther than the general ideas everyone has. --- For of course we all know something about the times of high and low prices for different foods.

INTERVIEWER:

----- Like fresh eggs ----- low in the spring and high in the fall?

DR. HOWE:

Exactly. Don't housewives usually take that seasonal change into consideration when they do their marketing and planning?

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, yes. The good home-maker who has to count her food money gives her family plenty of egg dishes in the spring, but when fall comes around she uses fewer eggs.....

DR. HOWEE:

--- But not too few, I hope. Let's try to keep some eggs in the diet always, especially for young children. Because no other food quite takes the place of eggs.

INTERVIEWER:

I accept your reservation, Dr. Howe. But within the limits of health, knowing how to make these seasonal plans and adjustments in the diet is very important to consumers who must buy on a narrow food budget. Every good housekeeper I know watches the seasons. If she's lucky enough to have money to buy in quantity -- and a cellar to store in -- she stocks up on as many things as she can when their prices are low. And of course if she can't do that, she at least substitutes the foods that are cheap for the ones that happen to be hitting high spots -- Wait a minute, Dr. Howe, I know what you're going to say. That you must not substitute foods without getting the same food value. We've learned your maximum by heart: 'Never unbalance your diet while you balance your budget.'

DR. HOWE:

You're right -- that's just what I was about to interrupt to say. It's no simple matter to be a wise consumer, is it? We must know what we're getting for our money; not only in pints and pounds but in calories and vitamins and minerals and so on.

INTERVIEWER:

But we're getting more help in the job all the time. Take today, for instance. You can give a real practical service to consumers by helping them understand these ups and downs of food prices. Tell us what that's all about.

DR. HOWE:

It's not such a good story when you take it as a whole. If you take all our price reports and average them together you find that the general average price of all items in the diet doesn't change much because of the purely seasonal changes in supplies of food on the market. True, there is a little difference. In November, food usually costs a little more. From now until April the average cost of all food usually shades off a trifle. But even in April average costs of all food are only about four percent less than in November. It's when you get into price trends for individual food that the seasons begin to get interesting.

INTERVIEWER:

Oh, I'm all for taking the separate foods and giving the facts and figures on each one, so that all consumers listening can put down the main facts to help them plan the year's diet and budget -- Don't you think you could start with the most important food and give the detailed story of each one?

DR. HOWE:

Well, I will if you'll allow me a little leeway to take detours into some of the reasons behind the changes -----

INTERVIEWER:

I haven't forgotten I'm talking to you. Naturally, I would not expect you to touch just the surface of a subject ---- But first let me suggest that everybody get pencil and paper ready..... Now, start firing.

DR. HOWE:

Since you will let me indulge in a few generalizations, I'm going to state first the two reasons given by the experts for these seasonal changes in food prices. One is the volume of food put on the market at different seasons of the year. The other is the special demands consumers make for certain foods at certain seasons.

The most temperamental foods -- the ones that take the biggest leaps up and down the price chart -- are usually foods that do not need processing. This is not an unbreakable rule, though. Some unprocessed foods have different seasons of abundance in different sections of the country, so the steady supply keeps the line on the chart steadier. But prices of processed foods -- foods like lard, and milk -- don't change so much by season as a rule. That rule is breakable, too, though.

INTERVIEWER:

Time's up for that generalization, Dr. Howe. Let's start talking about individual foods. We have already begun on fresh eggs -- let's go on ----

DR. HOWE:

All right. On the basis of past experience, in November can you count on paying 37 percent more for fresh eggs than you pay on the average during the year. In April, eggs are likely to be 26 percent less expensive than the average. Eggs are cheapest in the months from March through June, when hens are producing most.

INTERVIEWER:

I think it's clear..... fresh eggs are more of a luxury in fall and early winter than in spring..... We mentioned pork chops. How do pork chop prices behave in ordinary years?

DR. HOWE:

Pork chop prices made big jump over the calendar, too. They are highest in September, normally about 13 percent above the average level for the year. This relatively expensive period runs from August through October. During the fall, new supplies of pigs usually go to market. By December, pork chop prices go down some. They stay lower in price through February when they are nine percent below the average price for the year.

But here's where the difference comes in between the kind of food that must be eaten fresh --- like pork chops --- and the kind of processed meat that can be stored. Sliced ham prices don't change much from month to month. Their high point comes in August but prices then are only about three percent over the year's average. And February --- the low point for sliced ham prices --- is only a little more than two percent under the average.

INTERVIEWER:

Lard fits in there, too, didn't you say?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, it's another storable pork product. October is the expensive month for lard, about four percent above average. But March, the low month, is only $2\frac{1}{2}$ percent below average line.

INTERVIEWER:

Butter is a processed food --- does it stay steady like lard?

DR. HOWE:

I'm sorry, (Name of Interviewer)_____. Your logic is perfect, but you've landed on one of the exceptions we were talking about a while ago. There are some special points about milk and butter. First, there's the great difference in the amount of milk produced in summer and winter months. Cows produce the most milk in May and June. In October and November their production is low. The first claim on the milk supply comes from consumers of bottled milk. That is a fairly steady demand. The amount of milk left over for making butter, cheese, and so on, varies greatly. In summer, there is a plentiful supply. In winter the supply is smaller. And it's from this highly variable quantity that butter and other dairy products are made. So butter prices, not milk prices, reflect this variation. Butter is cheapest in June when supplies are piling up. The price is usually 6 percent less than the year's average in June. It's highest in December when butter supplies are usually lowest --- 7 percent higher than the average for the year.

INTERVIEWER:

And milk escapes this seasonal fluctuation, then?

DR. HOWE:

Almost entirely. The marketing arrangement for milk between dairies and producers' associations tend to keep milk out of the shifting market brought about by supply and demand. And the new state control boards and federal marketing agreements work the same way. There's practically no variation by season in milk prices, but if they fluctuate at all, they're higher in November and December and lower in June. What variation there is does not usually go over 3 percent.

INTERVIEWER:

Now before we go any farther, let's check up on the main points of these foods to be sure everybody got all the notes they need:

Eggs -- fresh eggs I mean -- are a lot higher in November than they are in April, and cheapest from March through June.

DR. HOWE:

That's right.

INTERVIEWER:

Then you said pork products like lard and sliced ham that could be kept in warehouses did not vary so much, but that pork chops go 13 percent higher in September than the year's average, are expensive from August through October. They usually go down in December and stay lower through February which is their low point -- I think you said 9 percent below the average for the year.

But butter breaks the processing rule and does vary from a low in June to a high in December, because it reflects the variability of milk supply while fluid milk prices stay fairly steady. Right?

DR. HOWE:

Letter perfect, (Name of Interviewer)_____.

INTERVIEWER:

How about vegetables, then?

DR. HOWE:

We'll start strongly. Onions take just the opposite price course from fresh eggs. Too bad we can't fit them right into the diet in the place of eggs. Onions are the most expensive from April through August, and cheapest from October through December when eggs are highest. The high point of onion prices is in May before the shipments of new onions come on the market, and the low point is in November just after the bulk of the crop comes on the market. In May onions usually cost 21 percent more than the run of prices through the year. In November they are 16 percent below the year's average.

INTERVIEWER:

And how about our old standby -- potatoes?

DR. HOWE:

Potatoes are another food with considerable seasonal price change, though not so much as either eggs or onions. Their seasons run something like onions. The cheap-potato period comes at the end of the year --- we're in the midst of it now. November is the lowest point, usually, and the highest prices are in May, June and July. In July the price of potatoes is likely to be about 16 percent over the year's average, as compared with 9 percent under in November.

INTERVIEWER:

Before we finish this, I want to go back to a point you made at the beginning --- about how some of the foods that rose in price during the summer actually did not go up this year as much as we might have expected from their chart. Pork chops was one. What else comes into the category of silver linings?

DR. HOWE:

Believe it or not ,butter and eggs both fit in there. The actual average price for October on butter in those fifty-one cities we know about was a slight fraction over 32¢ a pound. If it had gone up as much above its June price as it usually does, it would have averaged over 33¢ a pound.

INTERVIEWER:

And eggs?

DR. HOWE:

Fresh eggs actually sold for 35 7¢ per dozen on the average ,while again on the basis of their June price, they might be expected to sell at 38 2 ¢ a dozen.

I must tell you that in potatoes we score exactly. The actual October price average was 1.9¢ per pound and that was exactly the same as it should be by the chart, right down to the last tenth of a cent.

INTERVIEWER:

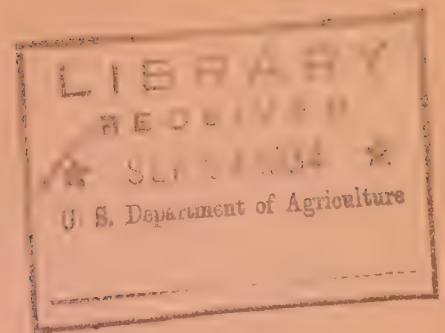
On that note of triumph, I think we ought to close.

DR. HOWE:

But I think it's my duty to announce to all consumers that there are articles on subjects with this sort of information in every Consumers' Guide.

INTERVIEWER:

Good, I'm glad you mentioned that. I didn't mean to let the conclusion of our interview come around without reminding listeners that they can get a real adviser on many of their consumer problems by sending in their names to be put on the free mailing list for the bi-weekly magazine, Consumers' Guide. Address Consumers' Counsel, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington.



INTERVIEWING THE CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

"What is Ice Cream"

This is a sketch of one vista of the New Deal Picture, in the form of a dialogue which may be presented by any two people. To take advantage of inside authority, the informative side of the conversation is from the point of view of the Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration with his specialized knowledge of administration activities. This part is introduced as "A Spokesman for Dr. Frederic C. Howe", and designated throughout the dialogue as "Dr. Howe". "Interviewer" is the intelligent inquirer who asks the questions which elicit the information, and the actual name of the person taking this part may be filled in the blank spaces marked "Name of Interviewer".

Issued by the Consumers' Counsel of the
Agricultural Adjustment Administration,
Washington, D.C.

WHAT IS ICE CREAM?

ANNOUNCER:

This is the hour for listening to inside information fresh from the vantage point of the office of Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. A spokesman for Dr. Howe answers the pertinent questions which (Name of Interviewer)..... asks him in behalf of the people who want to learn how to protect themselves and the rest of the consumers of the country. Their subject for discussion today is simple: "What is Ice Cream?" Now any child could answer that one -- couldn't he, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

You'd be surprised -- Let's see if even.....knows the answer., if you went around the corner and bought a quart of ice cream, what do you think you'd get?

INTERVIEWER:

I must say, I don't think that's a very hard question either. What flavor, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

Well, let's take vanilla.....

INTERVIEWER:

Then there'd be cream, -- and sugar, -- and vanilla -----

DR. HOWE:

Is that all?

INTERVIEWER:

Well, there might be eggs in a custard type -----

DR. HOWE:

Eggs are not smiled upon by the experts for a plain ice cream...

INTERVIEWER:

Well, let me see, what else.....

DR. HOWE:

You have left out one ingredient that represents sometimes as much as sixty percent of the total volume of the ice cream you buy

INTERVIEWER:

No! -- Well, I'll bite: What is this mysterious ingredient?

DR. HOWE:

Air.

INTERVIEWER:

Air?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, air. Nothing more nor less than the air we breathe. Some ice

cream manufacturers are constantly working on formulas which will beat up sufficiently to make more frozen ice cream out of less of the original liquid -- less of what they call the 'mix'.

INTERVIEWER:

Then we may pay for air when we think we're paying for ice cream?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, either more or less according to the kind you buy. Of course there are ice creams that have a good deal less air. And the Government experts are willing to approve ice creams with an air content as high as 45%. But when it gets over 50%, they say, it should be called 'iced air' instead of ice cream.

INTERVIEWER:

Personally, I think it's rather lucky for the women who want to reduce -- they can have all the fun of thinking they're eating ice cream when really they're only getting the food value of air....

DR. HOWE: (coldly)

Yes, if they can afford to pay for the privilege of fooling themselves... But it's quite a different sort of joke on a mother who is trying to stretch a small food allowance to provide for her children's food needs and still give them a treat once in a while.....

INTERVIEWER:

I quite realize that, Dr. Howe. I'm not so frivolous about this as I sounded. I know women who want to indulge in ice cream without losing their figures can eat water ices and sherbets and such. Whether there is room on the market for a dessert made of frozen fluff and flavor is beside the point. The point is that people have a right to know that's what they're buying.

DR. HOWE:

Spoken like a true consumer!

INTERVIEWER:

But isn't there a law, Dr. Howe! I have an impression that ice cream has to contain a certain percentage of butter fat, like milk -----

DR. HOWE:

Right, --- all the states but New Mexico have laws that say ice cream must have minimums ranging from 8 percent up to 14 percent butter fat. But that doesn't meet the problem. Here's what happens; The ice cream is mixed in its proper percentages by weight. So much condensed milk, so much cream, so much sucrose or corn sugar, so much flavoring, and so on..... So far, so good. The beating-up process comes after the mixing. That dilutes the whole quantity with air, so that when you get the finished product the amount of butter fat you get in a quart depends on the density: That is, on the weight per unit ----- per gallon, or per quart, or pint.

INTERVIEWER:

I begin to see light. Then one way to get control of my personal ice cream situation is to weigh it in my own kitchen, isn't it? -- Try one kind and then another, and compare the weights of the different pint packages -- and their prices?

DR. HOWE:

It's a pleasure to talk to you You're what I call a real, live-wire, alert consumer ... Yes, that is exactly the trick for a consumer who does not want to go blindfolded when she's providing food for her family.

INTERVIEWER:

How much should the ice cream weigh, Dr. Howe?

DR. HOWE:

According to ice cream authorities it should weigh four and three-quarters pounds per gallon. Bring that down to a quart, or a pint. I figure it at almost nine and a half ounces to the pint.

INTERVIEWER:

Let me repeat that so that all good ice cream consumers who are listening can write it down. If your ice cream doesn't weigh just about nine and a half ounces to the pint then it isn't what it should be... But Dr. Howe, about butter fat. Do I really want a very high butter fat content in my ice cream? I know that for very young children you buy a milk specially prepared to reduce the butter fat. I often think how queer it is that my dairy here in Washington actually charges me two cents more for a quart of 'nursery' milk merely because it has less cream in it than the regular common kind which is forced by law to have a certain percentage of butter fat.

DR. HOWE:

Yes, that's one of the grim little jokes in the dairy business... And you're quite right about butter fat content in ice cream. The butter fat content is the most expensive item in ice cream but not necessarily the most desirable from the point of view of children's health. The most important ingredient for children is the other milk solids, -- what they call the milk-solids-not-fat content. In other words, the solid constituents of the skim milk. It has all the minerals -- calcium, phosphates, and so on, for building bones and teeth in growing children. There's dried skim milk, that new product -----

INTERVIEWER:

Yes, I remember you told us how it could be used to such good advantage in bread for the school lunch loaf -----

DR. HOWE:

That's it: -- The very same new friend of children, dried skim milk. It's now being used by bakers, confectioners, ice cream makers -- and very well, too. The more they use it, the better for the farmer and the better for the consumer.

INTERVIEWER:

But of course when they whip the air into the ice cream they cut down the proportion of this -- what you call -- milk-solids-not-fat content, too,

don't they?

DR. HOWE:

Exactly.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, here I am..... as usual. As a good consumer the only thing I can do next is to ask 'So what?' Where do we go from here? What is the ice cream consumer's next move? What can we do about it?

DR. HOWE:

It depends on whether you want to do something in a big way for the general consuming public, or whether you are aiming only to protect your own family's interest. You've discovered for yourself already that you can solve your own personal problem by weighing your ice cream and comparing weights and prices till you find out which ice cream gives you the best value.

INTERVIEWER:

But Dr. Howe, I'm not going to leave it on record that I'm only interested in my own personal ice cream problem. Naturally I want to look out for my family, of course, because that's my job. But tell me: when have you ever found me a slacker when you were looking for volunteers to take a stand for the rest of the consuming public as well?

DR. HOWE:

Never.

INTERVIEWER:

Well, then: What can good consumers do to get honest ice cream on the market for everybody?

DR. HOWE:

Here's one thing they can do: There is the code of fair competition for the ice cream and frozen desserts industry coming up soon for hearing. As it stands now, it would allow an ice cream with almost seventy per cent air. Of course it isn't likely that reputable manufacturers would make an ice cream like that, but still, a good deal more air than is right could get to the market in the disguise of ice cream under the code as now drawn. That would mean much less milk solids per quart of the airy ice cream than a mother has a right to expect for her children when she pays for ice cream.

INTERVIEWER:

But can a mere consumer do anything about a code?

DR. HOWE:

You can write or telegraph to the Consumers' Counsel, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, which is representing consumers in the hearings on this code.

INTERVIEWER: (slowly)

Well, I ought to remember that easily --- That's your office --- Consumers' Counsel, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C. Now, in my telegram I suppose I should say -- 'We want a minimum weight standard in ice cream of four --- four, what was the standard you said the authorities had set?

DR. HOWE:

We recommend four and three-quarters pounds per gallon ... Yes,....., and I'd suggest that you and each person who can be told about this try to get other people to do the same thing. Get signatures in women's clubs. Circulate petitions through groups of friends, schools, school teachers, churches, all organizations interested in public welfare. You could say in your telegram -- 'Four hundred and seventy-eight women of Columbus City, Iowa, want ice cream code carrying provision for minimum weight and four point seventy-five pounds per gallon.' Any way you can think up to add pressure of numbers will show the manufacturers what their customers want. And what their customers want they'll get, you can be sure of that.

INTERVIEWER:

I'll start right in on that, Dr. Howe..... And now, is that the only thing we should know about ice cream? What about purity and sanitation and all?

DR. HOWE:

I was just coming to that. As far as the code goes, it's better to concentrate your fire on that one point of weight. Because most of the other points of ice cream value are covered in local laws. That is something for each citizen, or group of consuming citizens, to investigate in your own community, to make sure your children are safe when they're eating ice cream. In a great many states and cities there is a standard public health provision calling for the pasteurization of the whole 'mix' -- that is, for putting the ice cream ingredients together and then bringing the whole thing up to a temperature of 145° and holding there for thirty minutes. That kills practically all bacteria.

INTERVIEWER:

Isn't that a hard law to enforce? The health department doesn't have an inspector on the job everywhere ice cream is made, does it?

DR. HOWE:

Here in the District of Columbia they have a grand weapon for enforcement: Publicity.

INTERVIEWER:

I don't understand. You mean they --

DR. HOWE:

This is how it works. Every month at some time or other, not on regular days, inspectors take a random sample of the ice cream being sold at each place where it's made in the District of Columbia, and analyze it. The results are published in a bulletin: just what percentage of butter fat, just how many bacteria per cubic centimeter. And if the analysis should show that the most objectionable disease-breeding germs -- colon bacteria -- are present, that fact is published also.

INTERVIEWER:

Surely they never find those germs in these days! Why, that ice cream would be a scandal!

DR. HOWE:

You're right. But cases are found in our swankiest eating spots sometimes.

INTERVIEWER:

I can hardly believe it.

DR. HOWE:

Well, it's a sad fact, but in some cities it's not nearly so rare as it is here in Washington. Here mighty few firms are willing to take any chances on having that brand of shame down in black and white after their names for everyone to see. It's safe to say that if a consumer sees a firm listed this way once -- or at the most, twice --- that firm's name will be engraved on her brain. And her boycott on that firm will last as long as she buys ice cream in this city. That's something no company can afford to have happen. It's the one really effective control the consumer has of the product she buys.

INTERVIEWER:

And can Washington consumers get their bulletin each month?

DR. HOWE:

Yes, if they write to the District Health Department, Washington, and ask for the monthly Milk and Ice Cream Report. For people in other places and under different health regulations, the idea is to find out just what your regulations are, and how they are enforced. A women's group in any town can bring sufficient pressure to get action on any standard health provision. The trouble with most consumers is that they don't realize their own strength. Individually they are not so strong, -- though their grocer and their druggist do pay more attention to the complaints of individuals than the individuals have any idea of --- but as a group, determined on a definite program -----

INTERVIEWER:

'In union there is strength.'

DR. HOWE:

Right on the head as usual.

INTERVIEWER:

There's another weapon women have nowadays that you haven't mentioned, Dr. Howe. If we don't find any commercial ice creams that come up to snuff, we don't have to buy them. We can make our own ice cream. Even if we don't all have mechanical refrigerators where we can pop in a tray of pure cream and fruit and such combinations, any time we feel an ice cream mood coming on, the modern hand freezers don't mean such a lot of toil -----

DR. HOWE:

Oh, how well I remember those back-breaking hours when I was a boy ----- it seemed like a month instead of maybe an hour and a half of grinding away. But when Mother took out that dasher and I began to lick off the rich custardy frozen stuff my troubles melted away with the ice cream -----

INTERVIEWER:

There you go again, Dr. Howe, making me hungry.

DR. HOWE:

Well, it just happens that I've been spending the last hour in an ice cream factory -----*

INTERVIEWER:

Don't tell me ---

* (Skip to next asterisk if desired)

DR. HOWE:

I don't need to tell you. Here it is. Have you got some dishes and spoons around, Mr.....? If you have, get three of them out and start in on this fresh mango ice cream.

ANNOUNCER: (with appropriate noises, rattle of spoon on saucer, etc.)

I guess I can rise to an occasion like this, all right.

DR. HOWE:

Fine, and will you do the honors* You see, I wanted to learn at first hand how this weapon of publicity worked. So I visited a big plant. The big ones of course are sure to make arrangements to prevent ever getting a black eye from the public. The result is that they are becoming models of scientific cleanliness. Do you know there are only six men working in this plant that makes 3,000 gallons of ice cream a day! The ingredients go their way from being mechanically weighed and put together, through rows of pipes into huge containers where the 'mix' is pasteurized. A recording device shows exactly when the temperature arrives at the right point. It would take pretty smart bacteria to put anything over on those shining monsters of machinery. But you needn't take any chances on that. You can find out for sure by following the monthly ice cream report of the Department of Health. #

INTERVIEWER: (With appropriate sounds)

Here's your ice cream, Dr. Howe, and yours, Mr.....

DR. HOWE:

And now for a practical example of ice cream consumption.

INTERVIEWER:

Isn't it good. I want to thank you, Dr. Howe, not only for the ice cream, but for the tips you've given all of us on learning to be good ice cream consumers.

End here if desired.

